

STATE SENATOR • JIM BARCIA • 31ST DISTRICT

Barcia Press Release

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BARCIA URGES ACTION ON MEASURES TO FIGHT OUTSOURCING AND UNFAIR TRADE PRACTICES

LANSING – State Sen. Jim Barcia (D-Bay City) has introduced Senate Resolution 128 that supports federal efforts to create a Chief Trade Prosecutor (CTP) to ensure the enforcement of international trade agreements and investigate illegal trade practices. The CTP would function within the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative.

The resolution comes on the heels of recent bipartisan criticism from Michigan lawmakers of the U.S. Commerce Department Assistant Secretary for Manufacturing and Services as ineffectual and, according to some, “invisible.” The position was created in November of 2004.

“This legislation is critical to Michigan’s efforts to retain jobs and eliminate outsourcing,” Sen. Barcia said. “The Chief Trade Prosecutor would provide the necessary protections for manufacturers and farmers against unfair trade practices. It would allow this prosecutor to stand up to our trading partners and make sure they are playing by the rules.”

The first federal bill (S 817) establishes the position of Chief Trade Prosecutor and gives the CTP the authority investigate illegal trade practices and prosecute those cases before the World Trade Organization (WTO). A set of companion bills (HR 4186 and S 1542) would establish a CTP and allow the CTP to make recommendations regarding administration of U.S. trade laws relating to foreign trade barriers to U.S. goods, services, intellectual property, and other trade matters.

“Members from both sides of the aisle of U.S. House and Senate have complained about the current assistant secretary of commerce for manufacturing and his lack of authority, his low profile, and his inaction at a time when the Michigan economy most needs leadership and assistance to fight outsourcing,” Sen. Barcia said. “We are urging Congress to support the creation and appointment of a strong and decisive leader to help save our jobs.”

Michigan Senate Democrats have proposed a number of initiatives to help workers who are victims of outsourcing and to discourage the practice.

To visit the Senate Democratic Caucus outsourcing website, visit: www.dontoutsourcemi.com

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Sen. Barcia represents Senate District 31 that includes Arenac, Bay, Huron, Sanilac, and Tuscola counties. He is a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee where he serves as vice chair of the subcommittees on Agriculture, Environmental Quality, Natural Resources, and Transportation.